

## FCC CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The FCC Consumer Advisory Committee commends the Federal Communication Commission for its formal action on TV caption quality, as follows:

On February 20, 2014, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) unanimously approved new, more comprehensive rules for television closed captioning to ensure that viewers who are deaf and hard of hearing have full access to video programming. Effective January 15, 2015, all television programming with captions will be held to the Commission's quality standards for accuracy, synchronicity (timing), program completeness, and placement of closed captions.

The Commission's Report & Order:

- distinguishes between pre-recorded, live, and near-live programming and explains how the new standards apply to each type of programming.
- includes best practices for video programmers and captioning vendors, which promise to improve captioning quality for viewers.
- adopts measures to ensure that people who are deaf and hard of hearing will have greater access to news programming in their local communities.
- addresses several other issues related to closed captioning quality, including multicast channels, technical equipment monitoring, and recordkeeping.

In addition to the Order, the Commission issued a Declaratory Ruling clarifying existing rules defining requirements for "on demand" programming, bilingual English and Spanish programming, obligations of low power television stations, and video programming distributor contact information.

The Order is also accompanied by a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that seeks comment on reapportioning some of the captioning responsibilities and on ways to further enhance accessibility to television programming and improve the Commission's procedural rules.

Therefore, the members of the FCC Consumer Advisory Committee, convened at its regular meeting in Washington, D.C., commend the FCC for its historical February 20, 2014 regulatory initiatives to address TV caption quality, and look forward to a series of collaborative activities over the next several years between the Commission, the video programming industry, and consumer advocates toward a full accessible television viewing experience for all Americans.

Adopted: March 28, 2014

Respectfully submitted,  
Debra R. Berlyn, Chairperson  
FCC Consumer Advisory Committee